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THURSDAY, July 10, 2025

The Courier Leader

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Wanted fugitive taken into custody after pipe bomb standoff

On Monday, July 7, Morgan Scott Parish, 58, was arraigned in 7th District Court, Paw Paw, before Honorable Judge McKay. Parish was formally charged with 18 criminal counts, including terrorism, multiple counts of assault with intent to murder, explosive-related offenses, and assaulting/resisting law enforcement officers. A Habitual Offender – Fourth Offense Notice, was also filed. Parish was given a $5 million bond.

Charges filed include:

Count 1: Terrorism - Life or any term of years; reimbursement for government expenses.

Counts 2 - 9: Assault with intent to murder (eight counts)

Counts 10 - 12: Explosives - Possession of bombs with unlawful intent (three counts) – 15 years and/or $10,000 fine.

Counts 13 - 15: Manufacture/possession of explosive or incendiary devices with malicious intent (three counts) - 15 years and/or $10,000 fine.

Count 16: Weapons – possession of ammunition by a prohibited person – Five years and/or $5,000 fine; mandatory weapon forfeiture.

Counts 17–18: Police officer – assault/resist/obstruct (two counts) – two years and/or $2,000 fine; potential consecutive sentence.

Count 19: Habitual offender – fourth offense notice. Subject to sentence enhancement under MCL 769.12.
Bottom of Form

Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott said that on July 4, at approximately 11 a.m., Van Buren County Sheriff's deputies located the suspect, a wanted fugitive believed to be staying in the 28000 block of County Road 388. After developing probable cause, deputies obtained a search warrant for the camper where the suspect was residing.

As deputies approached the camper, the suspect detonated a pipe bomb inside. Deputies immediately retreated and requested assistance of the Van Buren County SWAT team.

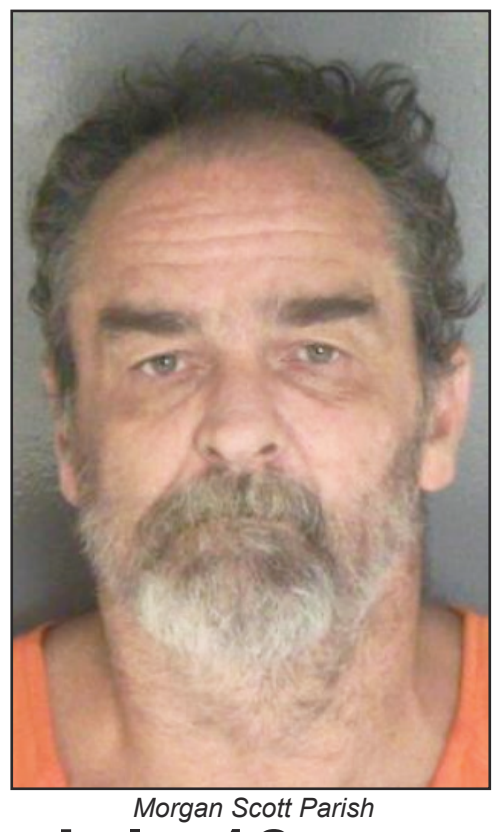
Upon arrival, SWAT personnel began verbal negotiations with the suspect, urging him to surrender peacefully. He refused, stating he would not return to prison and expressed his intent to kill all officers on scene.

In response, SWAT developed a tactical plan and deployed CS (tear) gas into the camper to compel the suspect to exit. As gas was deployed, the suspect emerged and threw a pipe bomb at officers, which detonated. Moments later, he exited again and threw a second pipe bomb, which also detonated.

As the suspect stood in the doorway, a SWAT officer deployed a less-lethal shotgun, striking the suspect twice. The suspect then surrendered and was taken into custody. He was transported to a hospital for treatment of his injuries.

No officers were injured during the incident.

Following the arrest, the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety (KDPS) Bomb Squad responded and located an additional pipe bomb, which was safely destroyed. Due to the serious nature of the incident, the Michigan State Police Crime Lab was called to the scene to assist with processing evidence.



Morgan Scott Parish

Lawton's Summerfest to make return July 12

Fireworks will light up the skies over Van Buren County as the Lawton Summerfest will be held July 12, with music, arts and crafts, and fireworks to wrap up the night. At the Van Buren Youth Fair, which kicks off Monday,July 14, a full week of events are planned, including fireworks, Friday night, July 18. Courier-Leader file photo

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
news4garrod@gmail.com

LAWTON - Following a year's absence due to downtown road construction and improvements, the Lawton Summerfest will return July 12, according to event organizers.

Highlights of the day will include a parade and fireworks at dusk.

From 2 to 8 p.m., Main Street will feature local vendors and crafters.

The Lawton Fire Department Hall will feature a variety of activities from 2 to 4 p.m., including kids' games and face painting with Maile & Friends

Raffle tickets for Great Wolf Lodge getaways will be available as well as Stomp Rockets located by HP Salon and Adams Hardware.

Cardio Drumming will take place from 2 to 4 p.m. in front of the food trucks.

Dunk Tank - 2 to 8 p.m.

Food trucks will be in operation at the fire department parking lot, beginning at 2 p.m.

A cornhole tournament for adults will be held on 2nd Street, between Railroad and Main streets, with registration starting at 1 p.m. and tournament action getting underway at 2 p.m. There will be a $20 buy-in, with a blind draw.

Three bounce houses (two for older kids and one for toddlers) will be set up at Reid's Corner from 4 to 9 p.m. Those participating in the bounce houses are asked to follow the posted rules.

The Summerfest Parade will begin at 5 p.m. with lineup starting at 4 p.m. at 3rd and Nursey streets. There is no registration required to participate in the parade. The parade route will travel down 3rd Street, then left on Main Street, and end at 4th Street. Candy will be allowed but must be thrown to the parade crowd.

The evening entertainment will begin at 6:45 p.m. with the National Anthem, sung by Dan Brooks. At 7 p.m., The Bronk Bros will take the stage.

Event organizers said alcohol will not be allowed in the streets for the family friendly event. Police will also be on hand, patrolling the event area.

Downtown road closures will begin at noon, with the event kicking off at 2 p.m.

Road closures will include the following:

- Main St. closes at noon. All vehicles must be moved off Main Street or they will remain there until midnight.
- Closure area will include M-40/Main Street, from White Oak Road to 4th Street.
- Side Streets Closed: 1st through 4th streets, from Main to Railroad streets.
- West side alleys will be closed behind Big T restaurant.
- Quiet Zone will include Franklin to Railroad streets.
- No parking on 3rd Street, from 4 to 6 p.m. for parade visibility and safety.

Volunteers are still needed for the event and for cleanup. To volunteer, contact Heather Shannon at (269) 655-4262 (call/text) or email at: heathershannon0@gmail.com.

70th annual Van Buren Youth Fair set for July 14-19

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
news4garrod@gmail.com

HARTFORD – A free grandstand with paid gate admission returns for a second year at the 70th annual Van Buren Youth Fair, which will get underway July 14-19, for its weeklong run.

Nightly grandstand features include:

Monday, July 14, 6 p.m. - Farm Stock Tractor Pull, followed by Magic Clouds Balloons Tethered Rides at 7 p.m. Balloon ride prices are $25 for adults and $10 for children.

Tuesday, July 16, 7 p.m. – Hartford NTPA Nationals Tractor Pull. The event will feature Super Farm Tractors, FWD Truck, Super Stock Combo. Sponsored in part by PowerFarmer.com. For more information, visit NTPApull.com

Wednesday, July 17, 7 p.m., Fair Fiesta Extravaganza, featuring music by Tejano Sound Band and Los Estrellas de Oro. Bangor's own Abel Munoz will provide a musical set in between bands, as well as Alex Mauai. A mechanical bull will also be available for participants.

Thursday, July 17, 7 p.m., Lost Nations Rodeo.

Friday, July 18, 7 p.m., Super Kicker Rodeo Production, sponsored in part by Honor Credit Union.

Following the rodeo, at dusk, a free fireworks show will light up the fairground sky.

Hillside entertainment ends its weeklong run on Saturday, July 20, at 6 p.m., with TNT Bump 'n Run, plus Demo Derby.

Skerbeck Entertainment Group returns with midway entertainment, July 15-19, Tuesday through Saturday, opening daily at 3 p.m., and 1 p.m. Wednesday, Kids' Day. Wristbands are $30 (Wednesday only $25). An unlimited Megaband is $100 with purchase before Monday, July 14, at 5 p.m. at: skerbeck.com (The Top Gun ride requires four additional plus a mega or a wristband).

There will be free nightly music in the fair's Community Tent, beginning Monday night with Vineyard Chicks at 8 p.m.; Tuesday, 7p.m. - Schlitz Creek; Wednesday, 7 p.m. - Black River Band; Thursday, 7 p.m. - Carrie McFerrin; Friday, 7 p.m. – Full Measure; Friday, 9 p.m. – Scott Spears Trio; Saturday, 7 p.m. - Waylon Hanel; Saturday, 9 p.m. – The Boomers.

The Magic of Trino will be offered Wednesday, July 16 through Saturday July 19, with shows at 3 and 5 p.m. Whispering Pines Mobile Zoo will be on display all week.

Special days include Monday, July 14 – Armed Forces Day with free admission for veterans and active military all day. The day is sponsored in part by Consumers Credit Union. Monday's Farm Stock Tractor Pull is sponsored in part by Dorr Farms. Tuesday - Ladies Day and Senior Citizens' Day – free admission for ladies (19 and older) and seniors until 5 p.m. Wednesday – Kids' Day – Sponsored in part by Tapper Auto Group. A Bicycle Give Away will be held. Friday's Super Kicker Rodeo Production is sponsored in part by Honor Credit Union.

General admission is $10 for adults; $8 for senior citizens; children, six to 12, $5; and five and under, free. Gate season passes are $35 for adults; senior citizens, $30; children, ages six to 12, $25; and five and under are free.

For more information, visit: vanburenyouthfair.com., or call (269) 621-2038. The fair is also on Facebook.

The fairgrounds are located on the corner of County Road 681 and Red Arrow Highway, midway between Lawrence and Hartford, 55670 County Road 681, Hartford.

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Boss to face second-degree murder charges

A 56-year-old man is facing multiple felonies, including second-degree murder, after hitting and killing a baby with his truck.

Terry Lee Boss was arraigned Thursday on charges of Second-Degree Murder, Operating While Intoxicated Causing Death and Reckless Driving Causing Death in connection to the crash.

The victim in the crash was 8-month-old Lucia Iris Seifried.

The crash happened the evening of Saturday, April 26, on Baseline Road, near Baseline Lake, west of Plainwell in Allegan County.

The Allegan County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) said a pickup truck crossed the center line and side-swiped another truck. That collision forced it to careen off the road and into a group of people standing nearby off the roadway.

Authorities said Seifried was killed while others were treated at a hospital.

After hitting the crowd, the truck rolled, hit a tree and ended up in a shallow area of Baseline Lake. The driver and passenger in the at-fault vehicle were hurt. People in the truck that was sideswiped were not hurt.

Police say alcohol and speed played a role in the crash.

Rain fails to dampen South Haven 4th parade

A brief shower didn't stop South Haven's Fourth of July parade on Friday.

Spectators and parade participants alike braved the elements for the holiday celebration.

Photos by Tom Renner

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BEACON HEALTH SYSTEM

2ND FRONT PAGE

County-wide emergency testing to be conducted Wednesday, July 16

PAW PAW - As part of an ongoing commitment to public safety and emergency preparedness, the Van Buren County Office of Domestic Preparedness/Emergency Management will conduct a live test of the Public Alerting System on Wednesday, July 16, at 10:50 a.m. TV, radio and mobile alerts will be activated in Van Buren, Berrien and Allegan counties. This test is part of a routine, scheduled testing cycle to ensure that communication systems are working correctly in case of a real emergency.

- What to Expect During the Test:
- EAS messages on TV and radio
- Mobile phone emergency alerts
- Messaging that clearly states:
  - "This is a TEST of the Van Buren County, MI warning system. This system will be used in emergencies to warn the public of danger and provide protective actions to avoid harm. Please complete a feedback survey on the Van Buren, Allegan, or Berrien County Emergency Management webpage. This is only a TEST."

These tests ensure that the public can receive critical information during:

- Natural disasters
- Hazardous material events
- Severe weather
- Any countywide emergency

Those who are able in Van Buren, Berrien, and Allegan counties, are requested to complete a brief online survey to show the effectiveness of this test message. The link to the survey is https://arcg.is/0yWmWi

This survey will also be available on the main website for Van Buren, Berrien, and Allegan County Sheriff's Offices.

For further questions or additional information, phone (269) 657-7786, website: Office of Domestic Preparedness | Van Buren County, MI, e-mail at: EmergencyManagement@vanburencountymi.gov

County now accepting proposals for Opioid Settlement Grant Program

PAW PAW - Van Buren County is now accepting proposals for the Opioid Settlment Grant Program. The county has up to $300,000 available over two years to support local efforts that prevent and respond to opioid use.

These funds come from national settlements with companies involved in the opioid crisis. The Van Buren County Board of Commissioners formed a steering committee to guide this process. Over the past year, the steering committee has worked with Michigan State University on a community assessment, including surveys, focus groups and interviews with people in recovery, family members, providers and other residents. Their input shaped the funding priorities.

What was heard and what is being focused on:

Access to treatment and recovery support, especially follow-up care after release from jail or court programs.

Transitional and supportive housing to fill critical gaps.

Transportation solutions for rural residents.

Education and stigma reduction so people understand and back clinics and programs.

School-based prevention programs for youth.

Who can apply: Non-profits, schools, local governments, tribal entities, recovery coalitions and faith-based groups. The county is looking for projects in peer support, recovery housing, transportation, education/outreach or prevention.

Funding details:

- Total pool: $300,000 over two years (2025 - 2027)
- Grant term: Jan. 1, 2025 – Dec. 31, 2026
- No matching funds required

Quick facts:

- Application opened July 1, 2025
- Deadline: Aug. 15, 2025, by 5 p.m. EDT
- Award notifications: By Sept. 30, 2025

View the full RFP and application materials at: www.vbopioids.com.

For questions, e-mail: communityservices@vanburencountymi.gov or call (269) 657-8200 ext. 1073.

Good Trouble Lives On rally to be held July 17 in Paw Paw

PAW PAW - As part of a national day of nonviolent action, Indivisible Paw Paw will host a Good Trouble Lives on Rally and March in Paw Paw, Thursday, July 17, from 6 to 8 p.m. The late United States Congressman John Lewis preached the "power of good trouble" through the action of peaceful protests. The out-spoken proponent of civil and human rights and voter rights passed away five years ago on July 17.

The rally will begin at the Maple Lake Amphitheatre in Paw Paw at 6 p.m. The highlight of the event will be a sing-along of classic '60s civil rights songs, led by Kalamazoo/Paw Paw musician Fred Sang and friends. The rally will also include speakers on injustice to migrant workers and threats to voting rights.

"Just like the civil rights marchers of the '60s, we will use music to bring us together and solidify our resolve," said Anne Hawkinson, events coordinator. "We are asking the community to join other community members in a show of strength against this crisis and be a part of a national movement that changes the conversation by standing together in the fight for our rights, our communities, and our values."

After the rally, participants will march to downtown Paw Paw and back to the amphitheater. Participants are encouraged to sign up online at indivisible – or just attend. Indivisible Paw Paw is committed to giving back to the community and will be collecting donations for the Paw Paw First Presbyterian Church's Mi Casa-Su Casa program which supports seasonal migrant farm workers and their families.

Suspect arrested following pursuit

Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Uniform Response recently (June 21) had a pursuit involving a Geneva Township resident. "The deputy recognized the driver during the incident and couldn't put him in custody the day of the incident," said Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott. The investigating deputy obtained a bench warrant for the pursuit and the suspect was arrested this week for the incident.

Van Buren County Sheriff's deputies made a traffic stop in Bloomingdale Township. Both occupants were on parole, and methamphetamine was in the vehicle. "Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) requested they be lodged with a parole detainer placed on them and they were also charged for possession of methamphetamine," said Sheriff Abbott.

Deputies handled a domestic call in Columbia Township. After investigating the incident, it was found that the suspect assaulted the victim by strangulation. The suspect refused to comply to commands by deputies and resisted upon arrest. The suspect was charged with assault by strangulation and resisting and obstructing arrest.

"Our Animal Control Division is teaming up with Bissell Pet Foundation's Empty the Shelter Event. It continues through July 19. Bissell is covering the adoption fees. Come on out and take your new pet home to their forever home," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled a BOL (be on lookout) in Bloomingdale Township. The call came in as a subject hiding in some pine trees. "Deputies located the subject, and he advised he was there sleeping there due to an argument with his girlfriend. He had a warrant for child support and was lodged on it. Nothing further came out of the incident," said Sheriff Abbott.

Deputies made a traffic stop in Antwerp Township for an equipment violation. "The driver failed to stop for a short stint. After investigating the traffic stop, it was found the driver had two warrants for his arrest," said Sheriff Abbott. He was lodged for the warrants.

Dispatch received a call, and the caller said, "Please track my phone" and "Please Stop." Dispatch sent cars to the area in Porter Township attempting to find the vehicle driving in question with a domestic going on. "One of the deputies working recognized the name and knew what vehicle they'd probably be in. A BOL was sent to Cass County as well, being they were headed that way, and they did locate the vehicle in question," said Sheriff Abbott. A stop was attempted, but the driver fled. After a short pursuit, the vehicle stopped, and the driver resisted. The driver was arrested on operating under the influence of alcohol, domestic assault, and flee and eluding.

Uniform Response handled a bond violation in the Village of Lawton. The report was sent to the Van Buren County Prosecutor's Office for review.

Unform Response handled a domestic assault in the City of Gobles. The suspect fled on foot prior to deputies' arrival. Deputies interviewed the victim, then searched the area for the suspect. Deputies found the suspect and lodged him for the assault and for a probation violation.

Uniform Response handled an abandoned vehicle in Paw Paw Township on Interstate 94 Highway. It was stolen from Kalamazoo and left abandoned on the highway. It was impounded for Kalamazoo.

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String Quartet presents premiere performance on July 18

SOUTH HAVEN -- The South Haven Performance Series will present the Burdick-Thorne String Quartet in concert on Friday, July 18, at the First United Methodist Church, 429 Michigan Ave. beginning at 7 p.m.

This will be the quartet's premier performance in South Haven. The quartet was endowed and formed in 1995 as part of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra's Artist in Residence program. The quartet's history is closely allied to the KSO's 75th anniversary commitment to expanding its community outreach.

The Burdick-Thorne String Quartet represents chamber music in its purest form. In celebration of Franz Josef Haydn, the "father of the string quartet," the quartet will feature his String Quartet No. 39 in C major in its July 18 performance. Other selections will include works by Bach, Beethoven, Mozart and Debussy. The program will also include a series of Tangos and Folk Songs.

The members of the Burdick-Thorne String Quartet bring impressive resumes on their instruments.

First Violinist Emelyn Bashour grew up in Amherst, Massachusetts, and now lives in Ann Arbor. She did her undergraduate studies at the Eastman School of Music, received a master's degree at the University of Michigan, and is currently studying at Michigan State University for her doctorate. She has been playing with the KSO since the 2022-23 season.

Lisa A. Williams is Artist in Residence and Principal Second Violin with the KSO. As a dedicated chamber musician, she has performed throughout the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. In Michigan she has appeared in the Fontana Festival of Music and Art, the Chamber Music Festival of Saugatuck, the Mackinac Island Performing Arts concert series, and the Michigan Festival of Sacred Music.

Violist Nicholas Jeffery teaches in Kalamazoo and holds degrees from the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. As a performer, he has been a member of the Madison Symphony Orchestra and the Illinois Symphony Orchestra, as well as several chamber music ensembles.

Brook Bennett, in addition to playing with the KSO, is the principal cellist of the Southwest Michigan Symphony and associate principal cellist of the South Bend Symphony. He is currently on the faculty of the string orchestra program at Bethany Christian Schools and maintains an active home private studio.

Bennett is a registered teacher of the Suzuki method and holds degrees in cello performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music and State University of New York.

Founded in 2010, the South Haven Performance Series is an all-volunteer community-based organization committed to providing a rich mixture of musical arts for area residents and visitors. Most concerts are held during the summer months with an additional holiday concert presented in December.

Performances are provided thanks to the generous support of the South Haven Community Foundation, corporate sponsors, and individual donors. A modest $15 admission fee is charged for the summer concerts while the holiday concert is presented free of charge as a gift to the community. Students are always admitted free. Tickets are sold on the evening of the concert.

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OBITUARY

Edward Oliver Wilson

Edward Oliver Wilson, 69, after a courageous fight with cancer, lost his battle to the disease on July 2, 2025. Ed was born on March 11, 1956, in Ann Arbor, MI, to the late George C. & Helen E. (Morrison) Wilson.

Ed was a proud Eagle Scout, alumnus of Belleville High School Class of 1974 and a graduate of Michigan State University, East Lansing. He shared many stories about his time in Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity. For over 40 years, Ed was a commercial lender for many southwest Michigan businesses. He served on several non-profit boards in his life; most notably Community Living Options, Kalamazoo.

Ed loved the outdoors. His fondest memories are the Boundary Water trips with his twin brother, Richard. Ed was an avid hunter and enjoyed his exploits in Michigan and Wisconsin for the elusive Whitetail. He will no doubt miss the time hunting with his brother-in-law, Ron, in the Kickapoo Valley region. Ed and his wife, Beth, bicycled, backpacked, rafted, kayaked, and camped in many areas of the country. While his daughters were young, many special moments were created on camping trips during their summer vacations. National parks and battleground sites were typically their destinations. Ed's special, new love in his life was his granddaughter, Parker, age 6.

Ed leaves behind to cherish his memory, his wife, Beth; daughters, Jessica (Dan) Evert and Parker; Lindsey (Oli); and step-son, Jeff (Kortney). His sister, Dr. Carol Peterson (Gary) and twin brother, Richard (Martha). On the Wilson side are nieces, Jenny, Emily (Daniel), and Laura (James) and nephew, David. Also, to the many extended relatives by marriage in Wisconsin and across the country.

Ed was preceded in death by his parents, and his infant brother, Charlie.

Ed will be missed by his family and friends, but he is no longer in pain and he is at peace with his Lord. He will be forever in our hearts.

Family and friends are invited to visit today (Thursday, July 10, from 4 to 7 p.m. at Adams Funeral Home, 502 W. Michigan Ave., Paw Paw. A Celebration of Life will be held at 7 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, the family request that donations and memorials be made to either Eleanor's Food Pantry, 221 Drew St., Paw Paw, or Webs of Grief, Milton, WI, at: websofgrief.org.

Share a memory or sign the online guestbook at adamspawpaw.com

Road Commission to begin second round of roadside mowing

LAWRENCE - The Van Buren County Road Commission (VBCRC) was scheduled to launch the second phase of roadside mowing this week (approximately July 7). This effort will cover all primary and local roads, excluding subdivisions where property owners maintain their own roadsides.

Mowing crews will work township by township, clearing the right-of-way to enhance driver visibility, improve roadway safety, and support the long-term maintenance of the county's highway system.

Vegetation will be cut from the edge of the road shoulder extending up to 12 feet, or to the start of the ditch - whichever is less.

VBCRC staff will strictly enforce their right to maintain brush and vegetation within the road right-of-way. Property owners should ensure the area remains clear of any unapproved objects or plantings, except for authorized mailbox mounts. Crops planted within the right-of-way are at the grower's risk and may be mowed without compensation, per Road Commission Policy 2022-02.

To learn more or review the full vegetation management policy, visit: www.vbcrc.org/vegetationmaintenance. This policy aligns with state law (MCL 247.665b).

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4:30 - 5:30 PM - REGISTRATION

6:45 PM - VOTING WILL CLOSE

7:00 PM - WINNERS ANNOUNCED

To reserve a spot, please call Lena Austin at 269-271-2285 or email at l.austin@gantonsc.com

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Market One celebrates local excellence at awards event

On June 26, Market One hosted its Fifth Annual Awards Event at the scenic Black River Barn in South Haven. The event brought together local business owners, civic leaders, and community partners from Cass and Van Buren counties to celebrate the achievements of standout businesses and forward-thinking municipalities making a difference in Southwest Michigan.

The evening featured a compelling keynote address by Tim Terrentine, Founder & Chief Translator of Translator's Consulting Group, and a dynamic performance by magician Pieter Hofstra, adding inspiration and entertainment to the celebration.

A highlight of the event was the presentation of awards to organizations recognized for their innovation, leadership, and economic contributions. Winners were selected through a nomination and application process. The 2025 Market One Award recipients are:

- Community Champion of the Year: Hydro Aluminum Metals USA, LLC (Cassopolis)
- Municipal Trailblazer of the Year: The City of South Haven & South Haven Area Water Sewer Authority
- Business Innovator of the Year: Consumers Energy
- Economic Pioneer of the Year: Holtec – Palisades Power Plant (Covert)
- Legacy Award: Edward Lowe
- Best New Business of the Year: Lake Effect HVAC Company (Dowagiac) & Sly's Seafood & Co. (Paw Paw)

"Businesses and municipalities across Cass and Van Buren counties are making remarkable strides and should be recognized," said Zach Morris, Executive Director of Market One. "We are proud to celebrate these organizations, which exemplify the innovation, resilience, and leadership that is essential to building a thriving regional economy."

In addition to the award winners, Market One also recognized ten distinguished supporters as Torchbearer Investors for their support within the last year and contributions to the organization's mission. These investors include: Aileron Communications, City of Dowagiac, EDP Renewables, Edward Lowe Foundation, Hydro Aluminum Metals USA, LLC, PNC Bank, Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber, Village of Marcellus, Village of Vandalia, and Wightman.

Leslie Goddard portrays Lucille Ball in performance

By James Windell

Lucy Ricardo was a wacky redhead who was always coming up with some screwball scheme on the beloved TV show "I Love Lucy." In real life, though, actress Lucille Ball was a shrewd businesswoman.

"Not only is Lucille Ball a great story," actress Leslie Goddard said in a recent interview, "but for me as a performer this was a real challenge. How do I show someone who was so different off screen from what she was on screen?"

Goddard, who will be performing her one-woman show "Lucille Ball" on July 12, 2025 as part of the South Haven Theater Series, said that she hopes there is a balance between Lucy and Lucille Ball.

For those who experienced other Leslie Goddard shows produced by the South Haven Theater Series – "Pam Am Betty," "Julia Child" or "Queen Elizabeth the Second" – this new show is guaranteed to engage, inspire, and entertain.

Goddard who has been doing portrayals of fascinating women for 20 years now, put together "Lucille Ball" because there has been renewed interest in Ball in the last few years. "There was a new biography of her that came out in 2023," Goddard said by way of explaining why she created this show. "Then, there was a new children's book about her that came out in 2024 and just this summer a new biography of Desi Arnaz came out. I was thinking that this is a lot of interest in a person who became famous 70 years ago."

An award-winning historian, author, actress and lecturer who presents on topics in American history and women's history, Leslie Goddard not only has a Ph.D. in History, but master's degrees in both museum studies and in theater. The Chicago-based actress has been a museum director but currently works full-time as a public speaker and author. Her presentations have been seen by audiences in more than thirty states, including scores of universities, museums, libraries, festivals, and civic organizations.

In a recent phone interview from her home, Goddard said that her repertoire of famous women includes television personality and cook Julia Child, aviator Amelia Earhart, first ladies Eleanor Roosevelt and Jackie Kennedy, film star Bette Davis, novelist Louisa May Alcott, Titanic survivor Violet Jessop, and modern artist Georgia O'Keeffe.

"I thought I would work in history museums after I got a master's degree in museum studies," she said, "but someone found out I had a theater background and they asked me to do a portrayal and over the years this has grown into my fulltime job."

She explained that she approaches her portrayals of women from the viewpoint of a historian. "So, the goal is to blend a history with the program and make it an entertaining, theatrical presentation," she said.

Also, as an historian, she talked about enjoying the process of doing the research and developing the character of a subject. "The fun thing about researching this program was watching old I Love Lucy episodes," she said. "In watching her, I developed a whole new appreciation for how talented Lucille Ball was. She was such a physical performer. I got the sense of the kind of fearless performer she was. Once she got into a scene, she really went for it."

Goddard's show "Lucille Ball" will be presented on July 12, 2025, at 7:30 pm at Listiak Auditorium, 600 Elkenburg Street, South Haven. General admission tickets are $15.00 and can be purchased online or at the door. To purchase tickets or for more information, go to //www.southhaventheatreseries.org/event-details/lucille-balls

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VIEWPOINT

Legislators, lobbyists married to one another is a conflict of interest

MIKE'S MUSINGS

MIKE WILCOX ■ PUBLISHER ■

I was sent an article from the Lansing City Pulse written by Kyle Melinn, that claims there are four state legislators that are married to lobbyists.

As Melinn says "that means in four households, one person works for the state to write the laws we live by. The other person works to tell lawmakers what those policies should be."

Now we can't regulate who marries who, but it would seem if you are one of 147 legislators running our State, and paid by taxpayer money, that either you or your spouse should step down from your position. It's not illegal but most certainly a conflict of interest and one you would think an upstanding legislator would want to avoid.

Just to be clear, lobbyists are paid to influence legislators. For instance, as an intern several decades ago, I worked for a lobbyist whose job was to influence legislators in an attempt to get more funding for Detroit Public Schools. We visited legislators at their offices, held get-togethers at a local restaurant, and did all we could to explain and cajole lawmakers to provide more funds.

So, I question how this works with the four legislators and their spouses. The spouses are paid to influence their partners. Something doesn't smell right with this arrangement.

The four legislators with lobbyist spouses are:

Sen. Sylvia Santana (D-Detroit). Her spouse is Harvey Santana, who works for the Alliance for Safety and Justice, a non-profit focused on criminal justice reform.

Rep. Pat Outman (R-Six Lakes). His spouse is Autumn Outman who has been a lobbyist since 2017 for Trinity Health.

Rep. Laurie Pohutsky (D-Livonia). Her husband is the former mayor of East Lansing but now is a lobbyist for the State Bar of Michigan

Rep Phil Skaggs (D-Grand Rapids). Kate Skaggs works for a multiclient firm that lobbies for a variety of organizations.

Of course, power couples are nothing new in Washington D.C. or Lansing. Since the beginning of time, they have wielded their influence on our laws at the federal and state level. But frankly I was surprised that we had actual spouses that might influence their married partner at the dinner table, and there are no written restrictions disallowing this.

Former Public Citizen's Congress Watch director once said, How can a member of Congress (in this case state legislature) possibly share a bed and a bank account with a member of a persuasion industry (lobbying) without a life laced by conflicts of interest?"

I would answer it's impossible and inappropriate. If you were to ask these four couples you would hear a myriad of excuses. "We don't discuss politics at home." "The legislation I am working on has nothing to do with my spouse." On and on.

If I had my druthers I would do away with lobbyists all together. Unfortunately, they have much more say than one would think about shaping the laws and regulations of our land. Legislators come and go, but lobbyists in some cases are in their positions for years. They know more about the legislative process than most legislators. Yet they are unelected and work in the background. You don't know their names or what they are advocating.

My suggestion to you as a voter is to be aware of these power couples next time you are in the ballot box. Only you have the ability to make change.

Life as Performance Art

G CORWIN STOPPEL

My sister Beverly is the family genealogist. She started some 60 years and has stayed with it ever since.

It is not exactly an obsession, but she has converted a bedroom into her office, complete with walls lined with shelves, and the shelves filled with several hundred binders full of her research.

Her focus is the vital statistics: names, dates and other information, including copies of old photographs. So far she has reached as far back as the 12th century.

Much to my disappointment, she hasn't found a vacant castle with our name on the deed, nor some hidden vast fortune. Then again, she discovered we are a direct descendant of an Italian composer whose son and grandson became the Marshal of Music for Kings James I and Charles I and II of England. That and $5 will buy a cup of coffee.

She also discovered we are a direct descendant of the Sheriff Nottingham. No, not the sheriff associated with the tales of Robin Hood, but his predecessor. This fellow was so wicked and corrupt he was hired by Richard the Lionhearted, then consecrated the Bishop of Bath and Wells. I think it says more about church and state than anything else.

And she discovered a very low rank title from Wurtemberg, Germany that no one bothered claiming. I did, thanks to some quirky English laws. Not that it is of any use in this country, but it is the proverbial ace up the sleeve for getting dinner reservations in Europe.

What she did discover was that our family has generations of ordinary, maybe dull individuals who lived very ordinary lives. They would be completely forgotten if not for her research. Worse, I suspect that when my sister falls off her perch and all her work is boxed up and shifted off to the local history center, they will slide further into obscurity.

Come to think of it, that is probably the way I'll end up: a notation in some genealogical records, on a shelf in the archives department of a small, unimportant museum. That will be the likely outcome for most of us.

Her interest is in vital statistics, mine is in their story. I don't press the issue by saying I'm right and she's wrong, even though she is.

Four generations ago my great-grandfather and his brother immigrated to the U.S. and led very ordinary lives. One became a journeyman stonemason, the other a journeyman cooper. Both decided life was better in America than the old country, so they moved. In time, they settled in southeastern Minnesota, each buying an adjacent quarter section of land a few miles west of Rochester.

Minnesota was still a territory then and the citizens wanted to make it a state. Statehood meant a lot of paperwork and a minimum number of citizens.

One day the postmaster rode out to see them, as if they were planning on staying, and when they said yes, had them sign a Letter of Intention. That was all it took to go on the voting rolls and vote in the next election. "For the right man, James Buchanan," the postmaster instructed them, warning there would be trouble if they didn't.

Long story short, these two immigrants and their families built their homes, barns, pulled stumps, plowed the land and began farming. By the time they took up permanent residence in Oakwood Cemetery they each owned a section of land and had several other streams of income.

Their sons and grandsons continued that tradition of hard work. Hopefully, all of them and all of us learn to find that sweet-spot balance between work and play.

Recently I have been listening to an unusual podcast called "Russian Mafia." No instructions on how to kill someone, rob banks or take over small companies. Rather, it is a series of the life-lessons the author has learned that led him to become more mentally and emotionally stronger.

He always ends his brief program with the words, "Be honorable." One time he pointed out that strong people honor their ancestors and family. "They are your source of strength. If you do not honor them, you are weak."

I went for a walk to think over this podcast and about some of my more-recent ancestors. For years I have known the list of things they did — immigrating, working near Cincinnati to save money for a place of their own, moving from Ohio to Minnesota, the homestead and more.

I knew about my grandfather who was in real estate and took off for a few months to go to northern Minnesota to prospect for copper. Or my father and all he did during his life.

Add to that my great-grandmother who endured the hardships of life on the frontier and buried two children who died of diphtheria; a grandmother who raised eight children, my mother who was the financial brains behind much of the work Father did, raised two children and was deeply involved in her church, the Scouts and more.

I started reflecting over the attributes it took to make all it happen. Instead of inheriting a castle or vast fortune, my heritage was a large collection of wonderful and honorable attributes.

The old Russian Mafia don was right on the money. One's ancestors are a true source of your strength. They deserve to be honored. The best way to do so is apply their best standards to our life and follow in their footsteps.

As I wrote earlier, there is nothing unusual or special about this family tree. Most of you reading this column might say much the same.

There is one other important factor, particularly for the last four generations. They were optimists and once they learned about the United States and wanted to move here. One of the attributes they embraced, and which is still ours for the claiming, is that we live in a country where we can fulfill our potential.

Sometime soon, take a few minutes to reflect over your family tree and come to some conclusions on how you can best honor those who went before you. What can you do to make their dreams become a reality, not just for you and your family but for all of us?

Local communities feeling effects of cuts

Dear Editor:

Has anybody else noticed that it's July, and Bangor's main street isn't bustling? Where are all the migrant workers ready to pick Van Buren County's lush fruit and vegetable harvest?

I talked to some other farmers who confirmed that for the most part they're not here. Why? Apparently, travelling hundreds of miles to do back-breaking labor in a country that promises to deport you to a life sentence in a third-world gulag for coming to help isn't a very attractive option.

Did everyone around here who depends on the ag economy not hear Donald Trump when he promised to start a tariff war and deport the people we depend on to get our crops to market? Because I saw a lot of Trump signs on farmland around here, and what he was promising sure seems against our best interests.

Were they unaware that the reason programs like the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and Summer Food Service Program are Department of AGRICULTURE programs designed, first and foremost, to help FARMERS? These programs allow the government to buy food from our farms to supplement farm income, prop up prices, and keep US farms in business.

What did we want the government to do with that food? Let it rot on the ground? Use it to feed hungry Americans? Or give it to hungry people in other countries to foster good will toward the US (like USAID did)?

Helping needy people is just a by-product of keeping our farmers in business and maintaining our capacity to feed America without relying on imports. When we voted to stop our fixed-income seniors, school kids, and poverty-stricken neighbors from getting food through these programs, we also voted to bankrupt our local farmers.

Call your congressperson if you care. Otherwise, I guess you can enjoy the less crowded local streets this summer and try not to think about the skyrocketing food prices headed straight for us.

Carey Lacaba

Big Beautiful Bill does not eliminate tax on SS benefits

To the Editor:

Much of what the Trump Administration has done the past six months outrages my soul, but the email I received at 10 p.m. Thursday night from the Social Security Administration has me furious and deeply concerned for the privacy of my personal information being used to propagandize his agenda.

Here's how the letter begins:

"The Social Security Administration is celebrating the passage of the One Big, Beautiful Bill, a landmark piece of legislation that delivers long-awaited tax relief to millions of older Americans."

I've been receiving Social Security for the past 12 years and before that I was the Representative Payee for my aging mother for seven years in the 90s. I'm very familiar with the standard business, non-partisan governmental language used by SSA to communicate with its beneficiaries. I have NEVER received anything that acknowledged the current administration – Democrat or Republican.

As Social Security recipients, we have a symbiotic relationship with the federal government that our personal information will be secure and not used to promote any political agenda. There is also an expectation that the information sent to us is accurate. This is exactly what folks were concerned about when Musk and his Doge crew gained access to SSA's database.

Here's the definition of propaganda:

Propaganda is the strategic dissemination of information, often biased or misleading, to influence public opinion or behavior. It aims to promote a particular political cause, ideology, or product, sometimes by appealing to emotions rather than logic. Key words are biased, misleading, influence and appeal to emotions, remember these as I explain further.

The letter continues, "The bill ensures that nearly 90% of Social Security beneficiaries will no longer pay federal income taxes on their benefits, providing meaningful and immediate relief to seniors who have spent a lifetime contributing to our nation's economy."

Social Security Commissioner Frank Bisignano wrote in the letter, "This is a historic step forward for America's seniors. For nearly 90 years, Social Security has been a cornerstone of economic security for older Americans. By significantly reducing the tax burden on benefits, this legislation reaffirms President Trump's promise to protect Social Security and helps ensure that seniors can better enjoy the retirement they've earned."

Biased and misleading: the Big, Beautiful Bill does not eliminate federal income tax on Social Security benefits. Nearly 90 percent of Social Security's 64 million beneficiaries already don't pay income tax on their Social Security benefits because the amount received is under the $25,000 annual threshold for a single person and less than $32,000 for a couple filing jointly. (Of course, if you have additional income pension etc., then your Social Security is added to that income and would be taxed accordingly.)

The letter further states the new law "provides an enhanced deduction for tax payers aged 65 and older, ensuring that retirees can keep more of what they have earned."

Biased and misleading: the Big Beautiful Bill does give taxpayers a temporary tax deduction of up to $6,000 for seniors ages 65 and older, and $12,000 for married couples. But the deduction has nothing to do with Social Security. It's a standard tax deduction increase for those 65 and older and it's only available for the tax years 2025 and 2026.

The letter ends with, "Social Security remains committed to providing timely, accurate information to the public and will continue working closely with federal partners to ensure beneficiaries understand how this legislation may affect them."

Influence and appeal to emotions: The federal government is not my BFF. They don't need to pretend that they care about me. But I do want them to be accurate and not fallacious in their communications, and to not use and abuse my personal information for political propaganda.

Ann Burch
Lawton, MI

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Fish boil set for July 12

James Windell

The Michigan Maritime Museum will hold it's 23rd Annual Fish Boil on July 12, 2025, on the museum's event grounds.

A fish boil is an old-fashioned Great Lakes event according to Brent Paige, Director of Membership and Marketing.

"It's a fun night," Paige said. "A lot of people aren't familiar with a fish boil, but it is a traditional Great Lakes event. Obviously, it's fish that is boiled. It's healthier than fried fish and quite tasty. Someone last year described it as lobster of the lake. It's finished with a nice butter lemon sauce as well."

Although most people are familiar with fish fries, fish boils have been part of Great Lakes culture since the early 1900s. Paige says that the Museum is proud to keep the heritage of the tradition alive. The fish boil is a major fundraiser for the Michigan Maritime Museum.

Besides the fish boil dinner, which includes an authentic boil featuring lake fish, potatoes, and onions, a fresh roll, coleslaw, and a sweet scoop of ice cream for dessert, Paige says there will be entertainment.

"That evening there'll be a 50-50 raffle, there's a cash bar, lawn games, just a lot of fun and a chance for the community to come together and enjoy a night on the waterfront,"

Paige said.

He indicated that almost everything from fish to the napkins will be donated through the generosity of businesses and organizations in South Haven. Fish boil supporters include: Star of the Lake Masonic Lodge, South Pier Creamery, Phoenix Streer Café, Barden's Farm Market, Clementine's, Bob's Processing, My Town Ace Hardware, and South Haven Public Schools.

The fish boil begins at 5:00 pm on July 12 and goes until 8:00 pm or they run out of fish. Tickets are $20 per person for adults and $10 for children (12 and under) and tickets are available at the door of the Museum at 260 Dyckman Ave., South Haven.

For more information, go to //michiganmaritimemuseum.org/event/22nd-annual-fish-boil-fundraiser/

Michigan Maritime Museum features the Wisconsin Walleye War

James Windell

South Haven History Club student Hayden Washegesic shares his research on the Wisconsin Walleye War in his short performance "Save a Walleye, Spear an Indian" on Wednesday, July 16th beginning at 12:00 pm at the Michigan Maritime Museum.

Hayden created this short performance to honor his own Native American heritage, and he has appeared at both the Michigan and National History Day Competition this year putting on his original show.

The Wisconsin Walleye War of the 1980s and 90s was a tumultuous time in the history of the Native American rights movement. Walleye spearfishing had been a longtime tradition and source of food for the Ojibwe Nation in Wisconsin, a practice that was protected due to treaties signed in the mid-1800s between the U.S. government and the Ojibwe. But that led to a legal debate when non-Indian fishermen found it unfair that the Native Americans could spearfish out of season.

The Walleye War was marked by an eight-year saga of protests, fundraisers, and media appearances against Native fishing rights. However, there were many voices that arose to call on the U.S. government to honor the rights of the Native Americans in order to preserve their traditions and practices. In his performance, Hayden Washegesic brings those voices to life in his presentation that calls attention to a significant moment in the history of the Lac du Flambeau and Lac Courte Oreilles bands of the Ojibwe Nation.

"The Museum is so proud to be able to provide a platform for this impressive young student to share their historical research and represent their heritage," says Director of Education and Programs Ashley Deming, "It would be great to see people come out to support and encourage our community youth doing such exceptional things."

Hayden Washegesic is a South Haven middle school student and a longtime member of his school's History Club. This is Hayden's third year competing at Nationals for History Day. He chose to focus on this topic as it highlights an aspect of Native American history that isn't widely discussed. This is also personal for Hayden as his grandfather came to South Haven to work with his father on the gillnet fish tug Elsie J as a commercial fisherman. Hayden wanted to pursue this topic not only for its broader historical importance but also as it relates to his personal family history.

This program is part of the Museum's year-long programmatic series Whispers Across the Water that showcases and celebrates the invaluable contributions of minority communities to Great Lakes maritime history and heritage. Through a dynamic collection of programs and events, this series amplifies the often-overlooked narratives of Indigenous peoples, African Americans, women, and other minority groups who have molded the region's maritime legacy.

"Save a Walleye, Spear an Indian" takes place at the Michigan Maritime Museum, 260 Dyckman Ave., South Haven on Wednesday, July 16 from 12:00 pm until 12:30 pm. The cost of attendance is free with Museum admission. Museum admission is $12.00 for adults and $8.00 for children n.

For more information about the Museum's events, go to https://www.michiganmaritimemuseum.org/events/.

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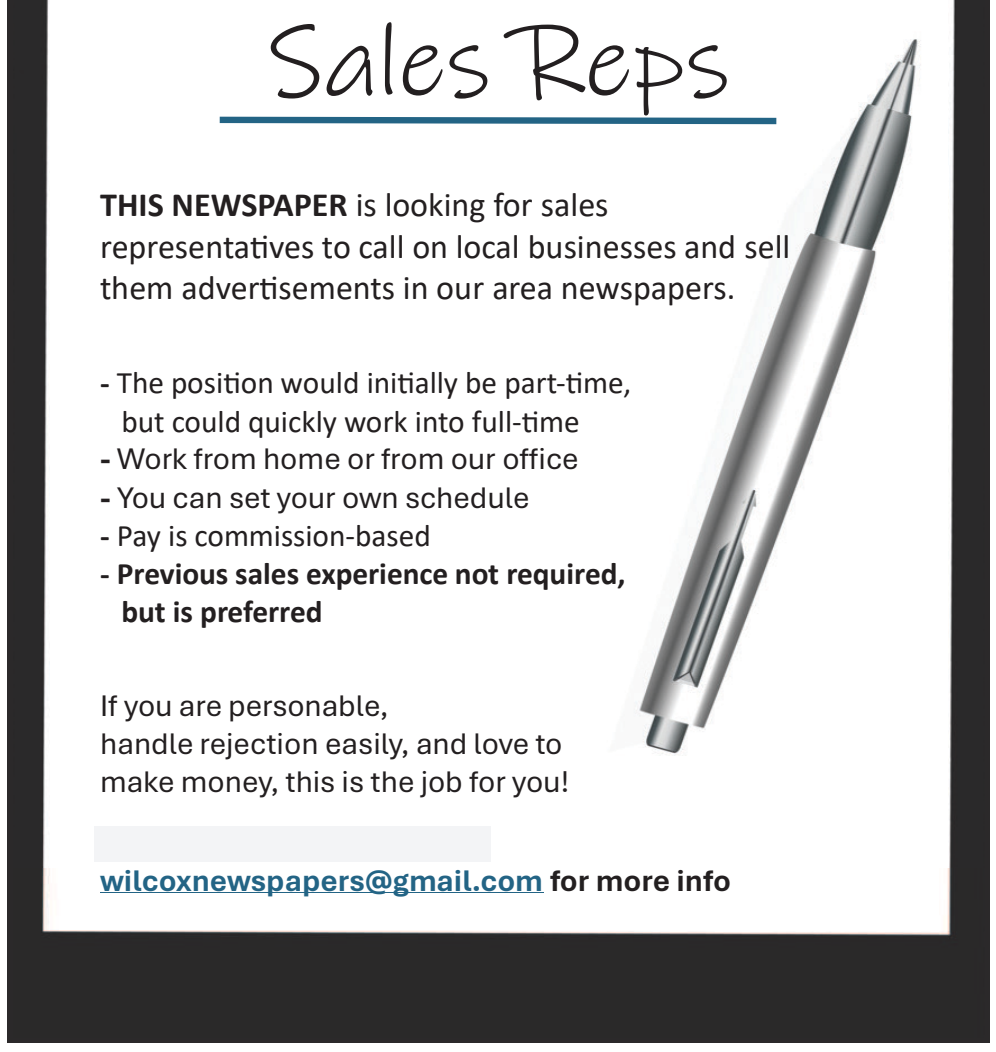
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Section B

Three to contest for South Haven mayoral race

Meet Mary Hosley

By James Windell

Dipping ice cream on a 90-degree day at an ice cream social, rescuing cats, attending South Haven Planning Commission meetings and South Haven City Council meetings. Those are things that City Council Member Mary Hosley does routinely.

But that's not all. There are also the musical events, the fundraisers, helping students in the South Haven History Club, serving on South Haven Regional Airport Authority, and various other events where you can usually expect to see Hosley and her husband Jay Campbell. To say she is involved in the South Haven community is a gross understatement.

But why did she run for South Haven City Council in 2023?

"I ran for the Ward 3 City Council position because I figured if I was going to be requesting changes I should be willing to sit in that seat myself," she said recently in an interview.

She explained that that is the reason she is running for mayor.

"It's the same philosophy," she said. "The City Council meetings are not efficient, and they are combative at times. I have actually provided the City Manager with some suggestions as to how to prepare material for the meetings so city council members are better prepared for those meetings."

She believes she is the right person to be mayor. "With my background being legal, I am trained to look at both sides of issues," she said. "You really need to identify the plusses and minuses, no attorney agrees on what they are, and I believe that is a strength I bring to the City Council and definitely bring as a mayoral figure: Being able to facilitate discussion of both sides of the issue fairly and equitably."

She also added that, "Between my legal training and having held many board positions on non-profit organizations, I've learned the importance of asking the hard questions to be pro-active and inject common sense into the decision-making process and to ensure all interests are considered."

Hosley pointed out that since joining the city council in January, 2024, she has "worked tirelessly to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of our community."

Mary Hosley was born in Lowell, Michigan, just east of Grand Rapids. She went to Kalamazoo College where she majored in Chemistry with a minor in Biology. She began her work life after college as a researcher in organic chemistry at Upjohn. After seven years of looking for the next breakthrough for antibiotics, she turned in her test tubes for textbooks when she attended Cooley Law School.

After graduating with a law degree, she worked in the Eaton County Circuit Court before joining a law firm in Kalamazoo. Leaving the law firm where she practiced appellate law, she went to Pharmacia and worked as a patent attorney for more than 20 years.

If elected mayor, Hosley would like to run better meetings. However, aside from running more efficient city council meeting, her goal would be to get the city council to recommend to the Planning Commission amendments to bring about more affordable housing in South Haven's residential districts.

"If we could allow duplexes and triplexes, and possibly even quadraplexes, in the same residential footprint," she says, "this would be welcoming for our workforce." She adds that South Haven is in a chicken or the egg situation: "I don't know what comes first because employers are reluctant to come here without workforce housing and we can't get the workers here without adequate and affordable housing. We need to look at both simultaneously, but there are a lot of different opportunities out there now to allow that to happen."

A key priority for Hosley is economic development that has many intertwined issues. She believes we should start with adequate and affordable housing for our diverse workforce. "If we could allow by right duplexes and triplexes, and possibly even quadraplexes, in our residential districts in the same residential footprint, this would be welcoming for to our workforce," she says. She acknowledges that there may need to be some site plan review to bring this about, but it is important to her to have smaller multi-family places for people in residential districts that "blend in with the surrounding homes."

She adds that South Haven is in a chicken or the egg situation: "I don't know what comes first because employers are reluctant to come here without workforce housing and we can't get the workers here without adequate and affordable housing. We need to look at both simultaneously, and there are a lot of different opportunities out there now to allow that to happen."

Hosley also maintains her support for safety throughout our community by supporting first responders and maintaining focus on beach safety, saying her voting record on the city council shows how she maintains support for her campaign positions.

Her campaign positions include respecting the rights of all property owners, advocating for changes to the draft zoning ordinance from the recodification committee to maintain key aspects of zoning in residential areas, and striving for uniform enforcement of our local, county, and State laws.

"I listen, do my due diligence, and pursue a solution with a focus on what is best for our local community," Hosley says.

Meet Mayor Annie Brown

James Windell

One thing is certain about South Haven Mayor Annie Brown, who was elected in 2023. She loves her job as mayor.

"I love being mayor," she says. "I love the people. And I like politics – because politics means people."

She's enthusiastic about talking to people and she takes advantage of every opportunity to talk to everyone she meets. As mayor for the past year and a half, Brown has talked to many people and she says that one thing she has heard in talking to people is that citizens of South Haven want a return to civility.

"People have told me that they want a return to civility," she says. "They want good manners, smart decisions. When we represent the city, we are role models, and we are the face and voice of South Haven. Developers, entrepreneurs and CEOs from Chicago are watching us. Good business comes from good manners."

Brown grew up in Hillman, Michigan, and attended Hope College where she majored in political science. When she was a student at Hope College, she spent a semester in Washington, D.C. interning for U.S. Senator Carl Levin. That led to her being hired as a staff assistant in Senator Levin's office, where she worked for more than two years.

Her ambition was to get a job in journalism, so she applied to every daily paper in Michigan. She was offered a job by the South Haven Daily Tribune, and she moved to South Haven to become a reporter. After a few years of reporting, she was promoted to Editor of the Tribune.

Since her journalism days, she worked as a preschool teacher and a recruiter for Tri-County Head Start. She also served as West Michigan Regional Coordinator for U.S. Senator Gary Peters. From 2000 to 2022, she was co-owner of the Filbrandt Family Funeral Home. Her work in the community included a stint as the first Executive Director of the Lakeshore Convention and Visitors Bureau and 13 years as a South Haven Public Schools School Board Member, serving terms as Secretary and President.

As mayor, Brown says that her top priority is – "and always will be" – housing. "Last month we approved a purchase and development agreement for the Overton Site with Dwelling Place," she says. "That project will have 30 duplexes, 53 apartments for rent, and two single family homes."

Her second priority is making sure South Haven has enough EMTs and paramedics to respond quickly to the area's aging community. "The South Haven Area Emergency Services is phenomenal and has a response time quicker than the average response time of Michigan," Brown says, "but our city has an increase in the number of senior citizens (Baby Boomers like me) and a decrease in the services provided by Bronson South Haven. And our first responders are getting burned out. Our city council will be looking for ways to fund the addition of more first responders."

As a third goal Mayor Brown lists the effort to expand regionally. "Our first plan is connecting wastewater infrastructure between Covert Township, Van Buren State Park, and Holtec," she explains. "Those entities have wastewater treatment systems that are insufficient. We are planning to connect with them because we are the nearest utility. The City of South Haven is the lynch pin in this project."

Among the accomplishments of her first term so far, Brown says that she is proud that the city council increased diversity on boards and commissions since she's been mayor. "We've appointed 40% more people of color to boards and commissions, increased the number of women by 14% and increased the number of LGBTQ+ commissioners by 100%," she says.

But, as always, she returns to her love of her job. "I love being mayor," she says. "I smile more and stand taller. I've loved South Haven for 40 years and now that I'm mayor and can see what goes on behind the curtain, I'm proud of our community."

Meet Joshua Lemmer

By James Windell

Although Joshua Lemmer didn't grow up in South Haven, he didn't live that far away from the city and he frequented South Haven often as a youth.

So, when it was time to look for a place in which to settle down and raise a child, he ended up in South Haven.

"We saw that there were a lot of opportunities here," Lemmer said in a recent interview, "and things lined up and we were happy to move here. It's a great community."

With a commitment and dedication to the city that has developed in the two years since he and his husband moved to South Haven, he says that he needs to have a voice in the future of the city.

"I've had some great conversations with people," Lemmer says, "and the message remains clear. The people in South Haven are ready for more positivity in local leadership."

Lemmer believes he can bring positivity and his skills in problem solving and collaboration to the city if he is elected mayor.

Born in Kalamazoo and raised in Bloomingdale, Lemmer attended Oakland University in Rochester Hills, Michigan, where he earned a B.S. degree in Human Resources Administration. He then went to Truman State University, where he obtained a master's degree in Counseling. He says that his plan at that point in his life was to have a career in higher education, helping students by working in student services. His first job was at Truman State University as Director of Student Life. After several years, he moved to Chicago taking a position at the Chicago Institute of Arts as Director of Student Life.

While in Chicago, a friend suggested he would be a good fit at Target Corporation. He says he didn't act on that suggestion for a year, but after applying he wound up as an assistant manager in the Highland Park, Illinois Target store. It was while working as an assistant manager that he says he fell in love with working with his team. "I came to realize that many of the people who worked at the store were going to work there for their whole career," he recalls. "I wanted to find out how could I make it a good space for them."

After almost two years, he moved into Human Resources at the headquarters for Target in Minneapolis. Initially, in his job he supported 21 stores in the suburbs of Chicago. Before he knew it, he was coordinating learning development, training, seasonal staffing, and hiring for Target's 2000 stores. After five years, though, he moved into a Risk Management Crisis Training position.

Lemmer and his husband, Bobby Pockette, came to South Haven to run the Inn at Park and Waters View Inn.

He says that being mayor is an opportunity to be forward looking and team building. "I have some good experience that I can bring to the table," Lemmer says.

Asked about his number one priority as mayor, he indicates it would be to understand what's going on with the city and what the city needs. "The city council establishes priorities each year," he explains, "and if I'm mayor I'll be part of that process. But what I'm hearing from the city is that the staff is overworked and they have so much that is going on, they don't have the resources to accomplish the priorities that the council has set."

He says that what he's witnessed in the council meetings are expressions of disappointment when things aren't getting done. "But there is no movement to actually say what they need in order to solve problems."

He says that as the fresh face in town he doesn't have a history of some of the controversy and division. "I really think that is my priority," he says. "We could pause, reset and reshape the working structure of the council to get things done."

He adds that he is pro discussion and pro debate. "But I'm also pro action," he says. "I think the council tries to do things that are perfect – and they can't get there. Nothing is ever perfect."

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SPORTS

Mattawan boys track team looks ahead

By John Raffel
Correspondent

MATTAWAN — Among the top performers for Mattawan boys track and field in regional action this season was junior sprinter Connor O'Rourke, who was fifth in the 100-meter dash in 11.33 seconds.

O'Rourke was fifth in the SMAC championships in the 100 with a personal record of 11.12 seconds.

He had finished third to start the season in the Paw Paw Lions Invitational. O'Rourke also had a lot of success in the 200-meter dash. He had a personal record of 22.38 for first place in a meet against St. Joseph. He also ran in relays for Mattawan during the season.

Another Wildcats who had a strong season was Jack Nicey, who was fifth in the 200 meters at the regional meet in 23.37 seconds. He had a PR during the outdoor season of 22.49 seconds. He had a PR during the indoor season of 23.41 seconds. He had a PR of 12 feet in the high jump.

Owen Fisher was seventh in the 1,600 meters at regionals in 4:33.0. He was sixth in the SMAC championships in 4:42.48. Also at regional, he was ninth in the 3,200 meters in 9:48.10.

The 4x200 relay outfit of Nick DeYoung, Benjamin VanLoo, O'Rourke and Nicey was fifth in 1:32.49.

Bangor girls track team closes season

By John Raffel

Savanna Marfia had a strong season for Bangor in the 400-meter run and was third in the regionals with a time of 1:03.87.

Also for Bangor, Sariah Labostrie was seventh in the 1,600 meters in 6:29.04. Cielo Maldonado was eighth in the 3,200 meters in 14:46.37.

The 4x400 relay team of Labostrie, Claire Heimsath, Marfia and Jaelynn Little was fifth in 4:46,97. The 4x800 outfit of Yarnissa Campbell, Heimsath, Labostrie and Maldonado was seventh in 12:13.03.

Lauryn Anderson was fifth in the shot put in 31-2 and second in the discus in 97-0.

Zoet leads South Haven in long jump

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — August Zoet had a strong junior season in the long jump as a junior in 2025 for South Haven.

Zoet started out the season by taking first in home meets on March 26 with a leap of 19-0 and then again on April 23 with an effort of 20-4.25. He was fifth with a 18-11 at the Watervliet Relays second in 20-4.25 at the SAC Tri Meet, first at 19-9.25 in the Fennville SAC; 11th at 18-9.25 at the St. Joe-Benton Harbor Rotary meet, first with a personal record of 21-2 at the Comstock Invitational and 10th at 19-9 in the regional meet at Berrien Springs.

Senior Enzo Haqq had a strong season in various events for South Haven. In the 200 meters, he took first place in 24.49 seconds to open the season and won the SAC triple meeting in 23.65 seconds. He was third at the Schoolcraft Invitational in 24.52 seconds. In the regionals, he was 19th in 24.26 seconds.

Haqq won two races in the 400 meters with 54.82 seconds at home against Allegan and Coloma and 54.54 seconds in the Fennville SAC meet.

Mattawan high jumper going to Wayne State

By John Raffel

Teagan Kimble had a memorable senior track and field season for Mattawan and placed in the regionals. She is now taking her talents to the college level.

A major memory for Kimble came this season in the high jump when she had a personal record of al record of 5 feet, 2 inches for outdoors and 4-10 for indoors. This compares with personal bests of 5-1 from the 2024 outdoor season and 4-2 from indoor season.

She won the conference meet with a leap of 5-2 in the high jump. She was fourth in the long jump at 16-1.5. This was only Kimble's second year of track and field.

"My friends got me into it," she said, adding it took her maybe just a couple of months to feel comfortable with the sport. "After my fist season I was pretty (comfortable with it).

The key, Kimble said, in being a good high jumper was "all mentality. You need to have a good mental mindset is what I found out. You have to believe you can do it."

Kimble also did the high jump for Mattawan. Her outdoor bests were 5-1 in 2024 and 5-2 in 2025. For 2025, her outdoor best was 5-1. She also did the 100 meters and for 2024 her best was 15.55 seconds. It was 14.29 seconds for 2025. "I PRed by almost a foot in long jump this season so it was good for me," she said. Kimble was in the 4x100 relay and she was usually the second leg.

Track and field was her only sport. "I'm going to Wayne State for track next year," Kimble said. "I got good enough why first year and I started having some colleges reaching out to me. Wayne State was the school I had wanted to go to for awhile. They said they would offer me a split other track team if I came there."

She will be doing the high jump. She's majoring in biological science. "I have a lot of training going on this summer," Kimble said.

Bangor runner has solid season

By John Raffel

Tyler Caruso had a strong track and field season in 2025 for Bangor in the 800 meters, placing third in the state regional with a personal record of 2:05.73.

Jonah Luter had a strong season in the 400-meters for Bangor this year and was seventh in the 400 meters.

Carter Brouwer was sixth in the 1,600 meters in 5:21.16. Trap Abbott was ninth in the 3,200 meter in 11:41.60.

The 2x400 relay team of Ariel Calderon, Amarion Geray, Quentin Goodman and Adrian Hernandez was eighth in 1:40.34.

The 4x400 relay squad of Tucker Arena, Mason Ashley, Landon Kitchell and Cole Hartmann was sixth in 3:52.34, the 8x400 outfit of Abbott, Carter Brouwer, Jack Loomis and Wes Summerhill was fifth (9:35.40).

Liam Mortensen was eighth in the shot put with a throw of 39-1 and was seventh in the discus at 116-8.

Mattawan track freshman has strong season

By John Raffel
Correspondent

MATTAWAN — Claire Yakiwchuk was only a freshman but had a strong season as a sprinter for Mattawan's track and field team. Yakiwchuk was 10th in the 200-meters in 28.01 seconds.

She started of the season impressively indoors with a time of 8.81 seconds in the 60-meter dash. In the 100 meters at the league meet, she had a personal record of 13.23 seconds for 12th place.

She also ran the 400 meter during the season plus the relays. She was on the 4x200 relay with Annemarie Pelak, Ashley Smith and Alaina Watson which was first in a deal meet at Portage Northern in 1:54.38 and first in a dual at Portage Central in 2:00.08.

Yakiwchuk was also on the 4x100 relay which was eight in the league meet in 53.94 seconds.

Also on that team was Teagan Kimble, Annemarie Pelak and Ashley Smith. Aurora Winters was a senior for Mattawan, who was 15th in the conference shot put with a toss of 26-6.5. Kyle Drobeck was a junior who took 12th in the league discus event at 81-6. Riley Whitaker was ninth in the pole vault at 7-3.

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SPORTS

Nichols sisters provide high hopes for PP softball

Kourtney Nichols (40), Megan Miller (28) and Kailey Nichols (31) celebrate getting their state runner-up medals for Paw Paw last month.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

PAW PAW — Kourtney Nichols was a sophomore pitcher and outfielder for Paw Paw's state runner-up softball team and can't wait for the 2026 campaign to arrive.

Her sister, Kailey, is a year younger and was also a key player on the team. Kourtney was also a designated player. After a dramatic quarterfinal win over Coldwater, "I'm obviously very happy," Kourtney said. "It made us feel that going into the next game, we can do anything."

Ironically, it happened the next day with Elizabeth Vanderburg's two-homer with two outs in the bottom of the seventh for a 3-2 semifinal win.

Nichols remembers after the quarterfinal game being confident going into the final inning. "I was confident with our base running that we could do it," she said.

Paw Paw lost 3-0 to Richmond in the title game and finished the season at 37-4. The key to the success, Kourtney Nichols said, "was we're all kind of like sisters now. We're all good players. I think coming together just makes us get better."

It was her first varsity season but a good transition for Kourtney. "The girls who were on varsity last year made it easy coming in," she said. "I got to play with them a little bit last year." A memorable moment for Kourtney came in a game against Vicksburg.

"Kailey hit a home run and right after that I hit a home run," Kourtney said. "That was pretty memorable. It was a regular season game. We needed to win that game to win conference." She had two home runs during the season. As a pitcher, Kourtney Nichols said a curveball or screwball was her best pitch. She also plays volleyball. She was set to play travel softball during the summer.

Kailey Nichols plays critical part in Paw Paw's success

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — Kailey Nichols will likely remember the 2025 spring season she spent with Paw Paw's softball team for a long time. Nichols was a junior cacher and outfielder for the Wolves.

After Paw Paw came from behind late in the state quarterfinal game for a 5-4 win over Coldwater, Nichols acknowledged it was perhaps as thrilling of a game as she's ever been in.

"Being a walkoff, it was even more of a thrill," Nichols said. "I always had full confidence in my teammates. There was never a thought we were going to lose that game in my head." Going into the last inning of the quarterfinal, "no matter what they said, I felt we all that confidence in our team," she said.

Of course a few days later, it would be even more dramatic when Elizabeth Vanderburg drilled a walkoff two-run home in a 3-2 semifinal victory over Carleton Airport to put the team in the state finals prior to a 3-0 loss to Richmond. The key to the team's success "I obviously feel was just having fun," Nichols said. "We all enjoy playing so much together. It's being able to be out there and having fun since we were kids." The Wolves had all juniors and sophomores on the team and no seniors.

"Early in the season, someone said maybe you could go to state and everyone started laughing," Nichols said. "Now that we're in the situation, we knew we could do it. Just to think it was a funny thought in the beginning, makes it so special."

Nichols was in her third varsity season. On hitting, "at the beginning we didn't see that good of pitching," Nichols said. "Once we saw better pitching, I've been making more solid contact. I'm hitting sixth in the lineup." She and her sister Kourtney had home runs in a game vs. Vicksburg.

"High school has given us an opportunity to play together again and it's really important to me," Kailey said.

Kailey played a lot of left field. "My team can trust me for every ball hit to me," she said.

She also plays varsity volleyball and basketball and did track for a season.

South Haven softball coach celebrates another fine season

South Haven's softball team had plenty of things to celebrate about this season.

By John Raffel

Wilma Wilson compiled her 38th season of coaching at South Haven and last spring marked her 36th year. It was a good one and there may be more to come. Her final record was 23-15 and the Rams were Lakeshore conference and district champions.

"I felt good (about the season)," Wilson said. "We had a fair mix of younger and older kids and had great leadership from the older kids. They created a great culture on our team. That was a fun group to coach. They did well. For the most part, I thought we did quite well." Pitching was obviously a strength for the Rams.

"We were a very solid hitting team," Wilson said. "We scored a lot of runs and set a school record for runs scored." Pitching depth also was a key. Three seniors led South Haven in the batting with Molly Verseput at .462, Madi Dotson a utility girl and catcher and Grace Strebeck at shortstop.

Addison Dekoning was a junior outfielder and pitcher. "We had a lot of kids who kicked in. We had two sophomores and three freshmen who will be a big part of our core next year who were really good players and did a good job for us defensively and contributed," Wilson said. "One of our strengths is we could hit up and down our lineup whereas a lot of teams, once you get through the fifth hitter, things dropped off a lot. But I never felt that way with our team."

As for next season, it will be a little of rebuilding," Wilson said. "We'll have a core group back. We lose the three seniors who are always hard to replace. We have a good core coming back who understand the culture and what the expectations are. We anticipate having a good year." Wilson said most of her girls are playing summer softball. Many girls are multi-sport athletes.

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Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on July 24, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information: Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): 7338 Hardisty LLC Original Mortgagee: Builder Circle Warehouse 1 LLC Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Date of Mortgage: July 3, 2024 Date of Mortgage Recording: July 10, 2024 Amount claimed due on date of notice: $468,107.20 Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in the Township of Decatur, County of Van Buren, and State of Michigan, is described as follows: THE SOUTH 1/2 OF THE NORTHEAST 1/4 OF THE SOUTHEAST 1/4 OF SECTION 33, TOWN 4 SOUTH, RANGE 14 WEST. Common street address (if any): 94760 40th Street, Decatur, MI 49045 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16). If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. This notice is from a debt collector. Date of notice: June 19, 2025 Mastrantonio & Orlando, LLP 308 N. Cleveland Massillon Road, Suite 200 Akron, OH 44333 330-434-1000

(06-19)(07-10)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: BRYAN BAILEY; ATTY: RANDALL S. MILLER & ASSOCIATES, P.C. - RANDALL S. MILLER & ASSOCIATES, P.C.; 1ST PUB: 6/19/2025; ATTY FILE #: 25MI00402-1; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
FORECLOSURE NOTICE ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, July 17, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made by Bryan Bailey, A Married Man to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as Mortgagee, as Nominee for Amerifirst Financial Corporation, its successors, and assigns, Mortgagee, dated March 30, 2020, and recorded on April 3, 2020, in Liber 1697, Page 565, Van Buren County Records, said mortgage was assigned to Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC by an Assignment of Mortgage dated June 02, 2025 and recorded June 06, 2025 in Liber 1779, Page 748, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of One Hundred Ten Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty-Six and 24/100 ($110,766.24) including interest at the rate of 4.25000% per annum. Said premises are situated in the City of Hartford, Van Buren County, Michigan, and are described as: Lot(s) 17, except the East 5 feet wide of said Lot 17, Block 1 of Warrens Addition to Hartford according to the Plat thereof recorded in Liber 2 of Plats, Page 7 of Van Buren County Records. Commonly known as: 315 E LINDEN ST, HARTFORD, MI 49057 If the property is eventually sold at foreclosure sale, the redemption period will be 6.00 months from the date of sale unless the property is abandoned or used for agricultural purposes. If the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241 and/or 600.3241a, the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of sale, or 15 days after statutory notice, whichever is later. If the property is presumed to be used for agricultural purposes prior to the date of the foreclosure sale pursuant to MCL 600.3240, the redemption period is 1 year. Pursuant to MCL 600.3278, if the property is sold at a foreclosure sale, the borrower(s) will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. TO ALL PURCHASERS: The foreclosing mortgagee can rescind the sale. In that event, your damages are, if any, limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Dated: June 19, 2025 Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C. Attorneys for Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC 43252 Woodward Avenue, Suite 180, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302, (248) 335-9200 Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Case No. 25MI00402-1

(06-19)(07-10)

NEW PUB -> COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: RYAN STEELE; ATTY: TEAM X; 1ST PUB: 6/19/2025; ATTY FILE #: 524417F01; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on July 24, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Ryan D. Steele aka Ryan Steele and Kimberly Steele husband and wife
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Freedom Mortgage Corporation
Date of Mortgage: September 15, 2017
Date of Mortgage Recording: September 22, 2017
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $98,615.11
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in City of Hartford, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: The South 50 feet of Lot(s) 3 and 4, Block 7 of Freeman Stowe's Addition to the Hartford Village according to the plat thereof recorded in Van Buren County Records, also the North half of Lot 1 Block 2, Map of Stowe's 2nd Addition to the Village of Hartford, according to the recorded plat thereof recorded in Van Buren County Records.
Common street address (if any): 308 S Maple St, Hartford, MI 49057-1225
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If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
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COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: MARGARET MINER; ATTY: TEAM X; 1ST PUB: 6/26/2025; ATTY FILE #: 524401F01; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on July 31, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Margaret M. Miner and Wesley E. Miner, wife and husband
Original Mortgagee: Michigan Home Finance
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Metropolitan Life Insurance Company
Date of Mortgage: February 5, 2007
Date of Mortgage Recording: February 12, 2020
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $94,653.99
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Bloomingdale, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: The West 1/2 of the Southeast 1/4 of the Southwest 1/4 of the Northwest 1/4 of Section, 9, Town 1 South, Range 14 West, according to the Government Survey thereof.
Common street address (if any): 41704 6th Ave, Bloomingdale, MI 49026-9704
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: June 26, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1565012

(06-26)(07-17)

NEW PUB -> COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: CHAD M. HOFFMAN; ATTY: ORLANS; 1ST PUB: 6/26/2025; ATTY FILE #: 25-006790; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM on AUGUST 14, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Chad M. Hoffman and Sylvia L. Hoffman, husband and wife, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for GMAC Mortgage Corporation, Mortgagee, dated November 3, 2004 and recorded November 12, 2004 in Liber 1425, Page 803 Van Buren County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by U.S. Bank Trust National Association, not in its individual capacity, but solely in its capacity as trustee of Citigroup Mortgage Loan Trust 2024-RP1, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Sixty-One Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty and 58/100 Dollars ($61,920.58).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Van Buren County, Michigan at 1:00 PM on AUGUST 14, 2025.
Said premises are located in the City of Bangor, Van Buren County Michigan, and are described as: LOTS 1 AND 2 BLOCK 8 MONROES ADDITION TO THE VILLAGE (NOW CITY) OF BANGOR, ACCORDING TO THE RECORDED PLAT THEREOF
35 E Monroe Street, Bangor, Michigan 49013
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period.
Dated: June 26, 2025
File No. 25-006790
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400

(06-26)(07-17)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: JESSE STONE; ATTY: TEAM H; 1ST PUB: 7/3/2025; ATTY FILE #: 524395F01; INSURER: FNMA
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on July 31, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Jesse Stone and Stephanie N. Stone FKA Stephanie Fabian, husband and wife
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Rocket Mortgage, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans, LLC
Date of Mortgage: November 18, 2020
Date of Mortgage Recording: June 14, 2021
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $153,034.08
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Pine Grove, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: That part of the North 1/2 of the South 1/2 of the Northeast fractional 1/4 of Section 6, Town 1 South, Range 13 West, described as: Beginning at the Southeast corner of said North 1/2 of the South 1/2 of the Northeast fractional 1/4 of said section; thence North 00 degrees 40 minutes 39 seconds West, on the East section line, 592.93 feet; thence South 89 degrees 34 minutes 34 seconds West, parallel with and 66 feet South of the North line of the North 1/2 of the South 1/2 of the Northeast fractional 1/4, 220.45 feet; thence South 00 degrees 40 minutes 39 seconds East, parallel with the East section line, 592.81 feet to the South line of the North 1/2 of the South 1/2 of the Northeast fractional 1/4; thence North 89 degrees 36 minutes 22 seconds East, on same, 220.45 feet to the place of beginning.
Common street address (if any): 01464 M 40, Gobles, MI 49055-9075
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: July 3, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1565480

(07-03)(07-24)

NOTICE OF HEARING ON SPECIAL ASSESSMENT IMPROVEMENT BY PAW PAW TOWNSHIP BOARD

TO THE OWNERS OF THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED PROPERTY:

ADJOINING MAPLE LAKE

TAKE NOTICE a special assessment roll for Maple Lake weed control in the total sum of 242,733.38, plus fees and administration costs, and identified as proposed Paw Paw Township Maple Lake weed control Special Assessment Roll No. 839 has been prepared by the Supervisor and Assessor. Said proposed Roll is described as being comprised of all the parcels of land, determined to be 121 parcels, in the District and the same is to be assessed with the name of the respective owners thereof, if known. The total to be assessed against each parcel of land in the Special Assessment District as the benefit of the parcel of land bears to the total benefit of all parcels in said District is $282.50 per parcel for 2025, and increasing 3% cumulatively per year, subject to modification in accordance to law, for 6 years commencing 2025 through 2030 and the proposed roll is on file with the Township Clerk and is available for public examination.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE a meeting shall be held by the PAW PAW TOWNSHIP BOARD at the PAW PAW TOWNSHIP HALL, 114 N. GREMPS STREET, PAW PAW, MICHIGAN 49079 on July 14, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. to confirm the roll and lay the levy.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE appearance and protest at the hearing held to confirm the special assessment roll is required in order to appeal the amount of the special assessment to the Michigan Tax Tribunal.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE an owner, or party in interest, or his or her agent may appear in person at the hearing to protest the special assessment or shall be permitted to file his or her appearance or protest by letter and his or her personal appearance shall not be required. The owner or any person having an interest in the real property who protests in person or in writing may file a written appeal of the special assessment with the Michigan Tax Tribunal within 30 days following confirmation of the Special Assessment Roll."

PAW PAW TOWNSHIP HALL is barrier free. Persons requiring special accommodation due to disability may contact the Township Clerk 7 days prior to the hearing to make arrangements for accommodating their disability. AMERICAN FOR DISABILITIES ACT.

Rebecca F Payne
PAW PAW TOWNSHIP CLERK

NOTICE OF HEARING ON SPECIAL ASSESSMENT IMPROVEMENT BY PAW PAW TOWNSHIP BOARD

TO THE OWNERS OF THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED PROPERTY:

ADJOINING ACKLEY LAKE

TAKE NOTICE a special assessment roll for ACKLEY LAKE WEED CONTROL in the total sum of $86,400 plus fees and administration costs, and identified as proposed Paw Paw Township, ACKLEY LAKE WEED CONTROL Special Assessment Roll No. 840 has been prepared by the Supervisor and Assessor. Said proposed Roll is described as being comprised of all the parcels of land, determined to be 61 parcels, in the district and the same is to be assessed with the name of the respective owners thereof, if known. The total to be assessed against each parcel of land in the Special Assessment District as the benefit of the parcel of land bears to the total benefit of all parcels in said District is $199.14 per parcel per year, subject to modification in accordance to law, for 6 years commencing 2025 through 2030 and the proposed roll is on file with the Township Clerk and is available for public examination.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE a meeting shall be held by the PAW PAW TOWNSHIP BOARD at the PAW PAW TOWNSHIP HALL, 114 N. GREMPS STREET, PAW PAW, MICHIGAN 49079 on July 14th ,2025 at 6:00 p.m. to confirm the roll and lay the levy. TAKE FURTHER NOTICE appearance and protest at the hearing held to confirm the special assessment roll is required in order to appeal the amount of the special assessment to the Michigan Tax Tribunal.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE an owner, or party in interest, or his or her agent may appear in person at the hearing to protest the special assessment, or shall be permitted to file his or her appearance or protest by letter and his or her personal appearance shall not be required. The owner or any person having an interest in the real property who protests in person or in writing may file a written appeal of the special assessment with the Michigan Tax Tribunal within 30 days following confirmation of the Special Assessment Roll."

PAW PAW TOWNSHIP HALL is barrier free. Persons requiring special accommodations due to disability may contact the Township Clerk 7 days prior to the hearing to make arrangements for accommodating their disability. AMERICAN FOR DISABILITIES ACT.

PAW PAW TOWNSHIP CLERK

Communicate for better days on the water and in the field

Caleb with a double

My phone pinged, indicating that I had a new email. The email was straightforward: caught a two-man limit of bluegills and 15 perch over 10 inches. Then my friend went into detail about where and how they caught them.

I have not fished this hotspot in 7 or 8 years. I asked my friend why he went there, and he stated that, according to his logbook, he has done well here in the past.

Regardless of the outdoor activity, talking and communicating with others is paramount. Becoming a good listener pays large dividends for me. I enjoy listening to others talking about their success.

On a recent bluegill outing, I spotted a boat that I had seen in the past. We pulled up and said good morning, didn't I see you on the river last fall? From this point, the angler went into how good the crappie action had been the past few weeks.

He stated that they would troll plastic grubs and action tails, much like the Charlie Brewer Crappie grubs or their version of the Mister Twister Tails. He went on about where the crappies were located and why trolling was better than casting on this body of water.

We learned about Hali jigs from an angler at the boat launch. This angler uses the Hali in place of a sinker. Trust me, this tip was one of the best ever.

Another angler explained his go-to bass baits. This angler will land at least two dozen master angler bass each year. He uses two techniques and has mastered both.

He loves flipping docks, and he enjoys fishing a black jig in shallow water. Once again, I enjoyed listening to this angler as he went into every detail on how he attacks his three favorite lakes.

My friend Larry loves hair jigs, and his partner loves the old Perch Pounder Rigs. In both cases, they added a one-inch piece of a worm.

Speaking of the Perch Pounders, here is a tip. Size eight hooks will land twice as many bluegills as size six hooks. The size six hooks when tipped with a minnow will land plenty of crappies and perch. We tip the size eight hooks with a worm or a wax worm when chasing the bluegills. We like the green or chartreuse color, followed by the gold and red colors.

Years back, an angler got me into the glow-in-the-dark teardrops for both bluegill and perch. To this day, we still use a bunch of these baits. Over the past 5 years, I met a guy who ties his flies, and he uses the Bully Spider style fly the most. He follows this up with a very small black fly.

Another guy that I met up north fishes a slip float with a white or black hair jig tipped with a wax worm. This guy lands more master angler gills than anyone I know of.

I met a crappie guy who fishes national tournaments and lives here in Michigan. This guy is a fishing machine. He ties up his Pinky style of marabou jigs. Marabou and chenille are tied onto very small jig heads. He will also use very small plastic tails on lightweight jigs.

I met a guy near Traverse City who helped me get reacquainted with slip bobbers for all species. This guy lands some impressive walleye using slip bobbers. Slip bobbers make up 90% of his arsenal when chasing walleye, smallmouth bass, perch, crappie, and bluegill.

Some days, he uses a single octopus or circle hooks. Some days, he will use a small jig head. Leeches are used all summer, and minnows during the cold-water periods.

I learned years ago to hunt all day when deer hunting on public land during gun season. I also learned from other great hunters to sit in spots where nobody else wants to venture. If you think of water, you guessed correctly. I want standing water when I hunt pressured deer.

Learn to listen, take notes, and share what you learn with others, and in time, you will receive much more than what you give out. Stop in at Bob's Gun and Tackle Shop for your outdoor items.

Jack Payne

Payne is a member of OWAA (outdoor writers association of America). He is an avid outdoorsperson who enjoys fishing, hunting, hiking and cooking. This column will hopefully enhance your outdoor experiences. "While I may have some knowledge, I am very fortunate that I do know many true experts that share their knowledge with me," said Payne. "Together, hopefully we all can learn and experience more fun in the great outdoors."

NOTICE OF VILLAGE OF DECATUR PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING

TO: THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF THE VILLAGE OF DECATUR, VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN, AND ALL OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE **that a Public Hearing/ Regular Planning Commission Meeting will be held by the Planning Commission on Thursday, July 17, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. at the Decatur Village Hall located at 114 North Phelps Street within the Village.**
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE **that the item(s) to be considered at this Public Hearing include, in brief, the following:**

1. Consider amending the Village of Decatur Zoning Ordinance Sections 42-9 and add a new zoning Section 42-20 to Chapter 42, Article 1, of the Village of Decatur Code of Ordinances to regulate Short-Term Rentals.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that written comments may also be submitted in advance of the meeting and delivered to Village Hall, or may be e-mailed to the Clerk at mduncan@decaturmi.us
Comments and questions can be directed to:
Village of Decatur: Megan Duncan,
Village Clerk/Treasurer
114 N. Phelps Street
Decatur, MI 49045
(269) 423-6114

The Village of Decatur will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services to individuals with disabilities at this meeting upon four (4) days' notice to the Village Clerk.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Village of Lawton Adopts New Rental Licensing Ordinance — Registration Deadline Set for January 1, 2026

LAWTON, MI — The Village of Lawton has enacted a new Rental Property and Short-Term Rental Licensing Ordinance aimed at enhancing the health, safety, and overall welfare of residents and visitors. This ordinance, adopted by the Village Council, establishes new requirements for property owners who rent residential units or short-term rentals within the Village.

Under the new ordinance, **all rental properties—both long-term and short-term—must be registered and licensed** through the Village. The registration process includes an inspection for compliance with safety and maintenance standards. These inspections are based on a comprehensive checklist covering both interior and exterior conditions, available on the Village's website.

All existing rental properties must be registered by January 1, 2026. Inspections must be completed by January 1, 2027. New rental properties must be registered prior to being offered for rent.

Failure to register a rental property may result in civil infractions, fines up to $1,000, and possible revocation of the rental license.

"The goal is to ensure all rental housing in Lawton is safe, code-compliant, and properly maintained," said Village officials. "These new requirements will help protect tenants and ensure quality housing throughout the community."

Property owners and operators are encouraged to begin the registration process early to avoid delays.

For more details and to access the full text of the ordinance, visit **www.LawtonMI.org.**

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON INCREASING PROPERTY TAXES

The Board of Trustees of the Paw Paw District Library will hold a public hearing on a proposed increase of 0.0503 mills in the operating tax millage rate to be levied on property in 2025.

The hearing will be held on **Monday, July 21, 2025 at 6:55 pm** at Paw Paw District Library, 609 W. Michigan Ave., Paw Paw, MI 49079.

The date and location of the meeting to take action on the proposed additional millage will be announced at this public meeting.

If adopted, the proposed additional millage will increase operating revenues from ad valorem property taxes 3.10% over such revenues generated by levies permitted without holding a hearing. If the proposed additional millage rate is not approved, the operating revenue will increase by 0.78% over the preceding year's operating revenue.

The taxing unit publishing this notice, and identified below, has complete authority to establish the number of mills to be levied from within its authorized millage rate.

This notice is published by:
Paw Paw Library
609 W. Michigan Ave.
Paw Paw, MI 49079
(269) 657-3800

NOTICE OF HEARING TO REAFFIRM THE WAVERLY TOWNSHIP SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT ESTABLISHED FOR FIRE PROTECTION AND OPERATION AND SPREAD OF ASSESSMENT

The Waverly Township Board HEREBY sets the **7th day of August, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.,** for a public hearing on the estimated costs of the established Special Assessment District to defray the expenses of fire protection/ equipment by reaffirming the special assessment among the benefitted real property owners of Waverly Township. The benefitted real property owners of the township paid a total of 1.4 mil under the previous renewal of the special assessment. This reaffirmed special assessment would be set at 1.4 mil for **2025.**

It appears the cost of contracting for services and operation, equipment and apparatus will be approximately $109,390.00 for the tax year 2025.
It is contemplated that property with a taxable value of $25,000 would be charged $25.00 per year, per 1.0 mil.

The hearing will be held at the Waverly Township Hall, 42114 M-43, Paw Paw, Michigan, at which time the Waverly Township Board shall be in session to discuss and hear comments which may be offered regarding the reaffirmation of the Special Assessment District.

Property owners have a right to circulate a petition requiring this matter to be placed on the ballot. The owners of 10% of the total lands in the township must sign the petition to request the Township Board to hold a special election, rather than just reaffirming the Special Assessment District.

The Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services to those with disabilities planning to attend upon three (3) days= notice to the Township Clerk. Individuals who require such services should contact the Township at the address listed above or by telephone at (269) 657-1776.

Dated: July 7, 2025
Starr Houston, Clerk Waverly Township

Notice of Public Hearing on Increasing Property Taxes

The Almena Township of the Almena Township will hold a public hearing on a proposed increase of 0.1405 mills in the operating tax millage rate to be levied on property in 2025.

The hearing will be held on Wednesday, July 16 at 6:30 pm at Almena Township Hall, 27625 CR 375, Paw Paw, MI.

The date and location of the meeting to meeting to take action on the proposed additional millage will be announced at this public meeting.

If adopted, the proposed additional millage will increase operating revenues from ad valorem property taxes 3.6% over such revenues generated by levies permitted without holding a hearing. If the proposed additional millage rate is not approved, the operating revenue will increase by 3.7% over the preceding year's operating revenue.

The taxing unit publishing this notice, and identified below, has complete authority to establish the number of mills to be levied from within its authorized millage rate.

This notice is published by:
Almena Township
27625 CR 375, Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-668-6910

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• FOR SALE •

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• AUCTION •

ALL SECURE SELF STORAGE WILL HOLD SALE OF ABANDONED PROPERTY AT A PUBLIC sale pursuant in 540.521-570.527: Public Auction: 7/29/2025 at or after 9:30a.m. EST: 37404 W Red Arrow Highway Paw paw: Jedaiah Merchant, 51.

STORAGE AUCTION
PUBLIC AUCTION on 7/12/2025 at 9:00 am PRAIRIE VIEW STORAGE located at 51350 CR 652, Mattawan, MI 49017, pursuant to 570.521-570.527, will hold a public sale of personal property belonging to the following tenants to the highest bidder. Contents include household goods, tools, and misc. 1. Meghan Overacker 108 & 213 • 2. Sheryl Sullivan • 3. Samantha Kelley • 4. Landon Gaylor • 5. Clayton Sharples z • 6. Marcy Matthews • 7. Mike Tarolli • 8. Christina Hayward • 9. Desiray Labarge
Cash payment is due at the time of the sale. All sales are subject to prior cancellation. Rules and regulations available at sale.

• HOUSING•

WANTED IN SOUTH HAVEN
Rental for winter months. Oct 2025 thru April 30, 2026. 3 bedrooms. 240-215-5081.

SERVICE DIRECTORY

FOR MORE INFO OR TO PLACE AN AD CALL (269) 657-3072 OR 657-5080 BEFORE MONDAY AT 5PM

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